

What is claimed is:

1. A system for enhancing security for a self-checkout station comprising:
 - a security controller for parsing an alert message that identifies a self-checkout station, an event occurring at the self-checkout station, and a priority level for the event; and
 - a security device coupled to the security controller so that the security device receives control messages from the security controller corresponding to the priority level assigned to the event identified in the alert message.
2. The system of claim 1 wherein the security device is a camera and the control messages from the security controller correspond to zoom, pan, tilt, and focus operations for the camera.
3. The system of claim 1 wherein the security device is an image data recording device and the control messages direct a video stream from a camera corresponding to the station identified by the alert message to the image data recording device.

4. The system of claim 1 wherein the security device is an image display device and the control messages direct a video stream from a camera corresponding to the station identified by the alert message to the image data display device.
5. The system of claim 4 wherein the controller includes a flashing alert indicator in the video stream directed to the image data display device.
6. The system of claim 4 wherein the controller includes an audible oscillating alert tone in the audio of the video stream directed to the image data display device.
7. The system of claim 4 wherein the controller includes a station identifier in the video stream directed to the image data display device.
8. The system of claim 4 wherein the controller includes an event identifier in the video stream directed to the image data display device.
9. The system of claim 1 wherein the security device is a pager associated with a security officer and the controller generates a control message containing a station identifier for transmission to the pager so that the security officer may observe the identified station.
10. The system of claim 1 further comprising a server for receiving event messages from self-checkout stations and assigning priority levels to events identified by the received event messages.

11. The system of claim 10 wherein the server is implemented in a terminal of one of the self-checkout stations coupled by a computer network to the server.
12. The system of claim 1 further comprising a plurality of self-checkout stations, each one executing security agent software, the security agent software generates an event message identifying a security event and the self-checkout station at which the security event occurs; and
- a server coupled to the self-checkout stations for generating alert messages from an event message received from one of the self-checkout stations and a priority level assigned to the event identified by the event message, the server being coupled to the controller so the alert message may be sent to the controller.

13. A method for enhancing security for a self-checkout station

comprising:

parsing an alert message that identifies a self-checkout station, an event occurring at the self-checkout station, and a priority level for the event, and;

generating control messages for security devices corresponding to the priority level assigned to the event identified in the alert message.

14. The method of claim 13 wherein the control message generation

includes control messages corresponding to zoom, pan, tilt, and focus operations for a camera.

15. The method of claim 13 wherein the control message generation

includes control messages for directing a video stream from a camera corresponding to the station identified by the alert message to an image data recording device.

16. The method of claim 13 wherein the control message generation includes control messages directing a video stream from a camera corresponding to the station identified by the alert message to an image data display device.
17. The method of claim 16 further comprising:
inserting a flashing alert indicator in the video stream directed to the image data display device.
18. The method of claim 16 further comprising:
inserting an audible oscillating alert tone in the audio of the video stream directed to the image data display device.
19. The method of claim 16 further comprising:
inserting a station identifier in the video stream directed to the image data display device.
20. The method of claim 16 further comprising:
inserting an event identifier in the video stream directed to the image data display device.
21. The method of claim 13 wherein the control message generation includes a control message containing a station identifier for transmission to a pager so that the security officer may observe the identified station.

22. The method of claim 13 further comprising:

receiving event messages from self-checkout stations; and
assigning priority levels to events identified by the received event
messages.

23. The method of claim 22 further comprising:

generating a log of events identified in event messages received from
the self-checkout stations so that a determination regarding storage of
image data may be facilitated.

24. The method of claim 13 further comprising:

generating alert messages from event messages received from a
plurality of self-checkout stations, each station executing security agent
software and each event message identifying a security event and the
self-checkout station at which the event occurred.

TO THE SECRETARY